(c) the extent to which this would improve the rapidly congesting of national highways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) it is too early to estimate the impact of private participation regarding relief of congestion on the National Highways since that will depend upon the response ultimately received from the private setcor.

Supply of Hank Yarn to Handloom Sector

263. SHRI S. MADHAVAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the quantum of hank yarn required by the handloom sector in the country;

(b) what are the steps taken to supply hank yarn to the handloom weavers at reasonable prices; and

(c) whether the South India Mills Association and the Northern India Textile Mills Association have agreed to supply the requisite quantity of hank yarn at pre-budget prices to the National Handloom Development Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) In view of the decentralised nature of production in handloom sector, it is difficult to quantify the requirement of hank yarn in the handloom sector. However, the requirement of cotton hank yarn in the handloom sector has been estimated at 372 million kgs on the basis of number of looms and monthly average productivity per loom.

(b) Central Government have arrangements of standing nature to ensure the regular supply of hank yarn to the handloom weavers at reasonable prices through various measures, such as (i) The Hank Yarn Obligation Scheme which requires every producer of yarn to pack at least 50 per cent of the total yarn packed for civil consumption in hank form; (ii) Loan assistance through National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) for setting up of new Weavers' Cooperative Spinning Mills and expanding the capacity of existing weavers' cooperative spinning mills in order to augment production for the handloom sector; (iii) Setting up of the National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC) with the primary objective of supplying hank yarn to weavers at reasonable prices;

(iv) Constitution of State Level Yarn Price Fixation Committees to regulate selling prices of hank yarn produced by cooperative and State sector mills for supplies to the handloom weavers; and (v) Complete exemption of excise duty on plain reel hank yarn and partial exemption on double cross reel hand yarn in order to make available yarn to handloom weavers at reasonable prices.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Setting up of Institute of Handloom Technology in Andhra Pradesh

264. SHRI PRAGADA KOTAIAH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have agreed for the setting up of an Institute of Handloom Technology in Andhra Pradesh; if so, when; and

(b) whether the Institute has been set up and if not, what are the reasons for delay in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) The